

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for routing information in a data processing system comprising the steps of :

5 checking an inbox periodically to determine if new data has been received in the inbox;

determining a destination for the new data based on a routing table associated with the inbox if new data has been received in the inbox; and transmitting the new data to the determined destination.

2. The process of claim 1 wherein the step of checking the inbox  
10 periodically includes a sub-step of checking a plurality of inboxes periodically.

3. The process of claim 2 wherein each of the plurality of inboxes has a routing table associated with it.

4. The process of claim 1 wherein the step of determining the destination includes a sub-step of matching information in an index field of the  
15 new data with information in the routing table and reading destination information associated with the matching information in the routing table.

5. The process of claim 4 wherein the index field comprises one of each of a policy holder name, a social security number, a date of birth, a doctor name, a provider name, a type of document and a destination.

20 6. A method of routing information in a data processing system comprising the steps of:

receiving a data package including a descriptor file in a first inbox of an information router from a first external system;

25 recording the receipt of the data package in an event transaction logging database;

transmitting the data package to a package examination engine;

reading the descriptor file in the package examination engine;

comparing information in the descriptor file to a routing table;

following an error procedure included in the routing table if the information in the descriptor file does not match an entry in the routing table or if there is a package error; and

transmitting the data package to a destination system based on  
5 corresponding routing information included in the routing table if the information in the descriptor file matches an entry in the routing table.

7. The process of claim 6 wherein the step of transmitting the data package includes a sub-step of placing the package in a predetermined receptacle to await transmission to the destination system.

10 8. The process of claim 7 wherein the predetermined receptacle is one of an outbox of the information router and an inbox of the destination system.

9. The process of claim 6 wherein the step of following the error procedure includes a sub-step of placing the data package into an internal error document storage directory.

15 10. The process of claim 6 wherein the step following the error procedure includes a sub-step of transmitting the data package to a second external system for specialized handling.

20 11. The process of claim 6 further comprising a step of recording an entry into the event transaction logging database for each processing operation performed on the data package.

12. The process of claim 6 further comprising a step of pulling the data package into the first inbox of the information router from an outbox of the first external system.

25 13. The process of claim 6 further comprising a step of receiving the data package back from the destination system in a second inbox of the information router after the destination system has processed the data package.

14. The process of claim 13 wherein the first inbox of the information router and the second inbox of the information router are the same.

15. The process of claim 6 further comprising a step of creating the routing table to correspond to a predetermined data package format, the routing table having a plurality of fields.

5 16. The process of claim 15 wherein the routing table fields include at least one of a source system field, a source directory field, a criteria field, a destination system field, a destination directory field, an error system field and an error location field.

17. A method of monitoring one or more data packages routed through an information router comprising the steps of:

10 recording each transaction performed by the information router on each of the one or more data packages;

monitoring a location of each of the one or more data packages; and  
transmitting information regarding the data package to a user.

15 18. The process of claim 17 wherein the step of recording each transaction includes a sub-step of recording at least one of a package arrival event, a package routing event, a package changing event and a package forwarding event.

19. The process of claim 17 further comprising assigning a unique transaction identification to each of the one or more data packages for recording  
20 information regarding each of the one or more data packages for a time when each of the one or more data packages enters the information router until another time when each of the one or more data packages leaves the information router.

20. The process of claim 17 wherein the step of recording each transaction includes a sub-step of recording each transaction in a database.

25 21. The process of claim 17 wherein the step of recording each transaction builds a complete tracking history of each of the one or more data packages for a time when each of the one or more data packages enters the information router until another time when each of the one or more data packages leaves the information router.

22. The process of claim 17 wherein the step of transmitting information regarding each of the one or more data packages to a user includes a sub-step of transmitting information concerning at least one of a number of the stops made by each of the one or more data packages, a time at which the at least one of the number of the stops was made by each of the one or more data packages, and a system to which the at least one of the one or more data packages was routed.

23. The process of claim 17 further comprising a step of scanning for any of the one or more data packages that have not been forwarded and determining at least one of an exact location of each of the one or more non-forwarded data packages and a forwarding location of each of the one or more data packages.

24. The process of claim 23 further comprising a step of using a query tool to scan for each of the one or more non-forwarded data packages.

25. The process of claim 17 further comprising the steps of:  
generating a report including at least one of a plurality of system statistics and a plurality of data packages in error queues to users; and  
transmitting the report over a network.

26. The process of claim 17 further comprising a step of downloading the information regarding each of the one or more data packages at a plurality of predetermined time intervals from the information router to an external database wherein the information regarding each of the one or more data packages from the information router may be combined with information regarding each of the one or more data packages from one or more external systems.

27. The process of claim 17 wherein the step of transmitting information regarding each of the one or more data packages includes a sub-step of transmitting information regarding each of the one or more data packages in response to a user request.

28. A system for routing information in a data processing system comprising:

an information router for routing a data package including  
a package examination engine for reading a descriptor file for the  
data package including descriptive information about the data package;  
a decision engine for comparing the descriptive information in the  
5 descriptor file to routing information in a routing table; and  
a routing engine to route the data package to a destination system  
based on the routing information from the routing table, if the descriptive  
information in the descriptor file matches a routing information entry in the  
routing table, and to follow an internal error procedure if the descriptive  
10 information in the descriptor file does not match a routing information entry in the  
routing table or if there is a package error.

29. The system of claim 28 further comprising an event transaction  
logging database for recording each transaction performed by the information  
router on the data package.

15 30. The system of claim 29 wherein the event transaction logging  
database is configured to track at least one of a location of the data package and  
any non-forwarded data packages.

31. The system of claim 29 wherein the event transaction logging  
database is configured to build a tracking history of the data package.

20 32. The system of claim 29 wherein the event transaction logging  
database is configured to transmit information concerning the data package to a  
user.

25 33. The system of claim 29 further comprising a query tool to look up  
any non-forwarded data packages and to determine a current location of any such  
non-forwarded data package and a forwarding location for the non-forwarded data  
package.

34. The system of claim 29 further comprising a report generator to  
create a report including at least one of a plurality of system statistics and a  
plurality of documents in an error queue.

35. The system of claim 29 further comprising an external data warehouse to download data package information at a plurality of predetermined time intervals wherein the external data warehouse allows consolidation of data package information from the information router and external systems.

5 36. A method of submitting data to a data processing system comprising the steps of :

creating a descriptor file for the data, the descriptor file including information about the data;

associating the descriptor file with the data to form a data package; and

10 placing the data package in a receptacle for submitting to the data processing system.

37. The process of claim 36 wherein the step of placing the data package in a receptacle includes a sub-step of placing the data package in an outbox wherein the data processing system pulls the data package from the  
15 outbox.

38. The process of claim 36 wherein the step of placing the data package in a receptacle includes a sub-step of transmitting the data package to a data processing system inbox.

39. The process of claim 36 wherein the step of creating the descriptor  
20 file includes a sub-step of creating the descriptor file to include a plurality of predefined fields in a routing table of the data processing system.

40. The process of claim 39 wherein the plurality of predefined fields of the descriptor file include at least one of a name field, a customer number field, a source field, a data type field, and a files attached field.